ARCHITECTURAL STYLES OF THE NORTHERN PONTIC REGION IN THE FIRST CENTURIES A.D.

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From the second half to the end of the I[st] c. B. C. the Northern Pontic Greek cities have entered a new phase of the historical development-getting into the orbit of political interests of the Roman Empire. The first half of the I[st] c. A. D. was an active growing period of the Roman land ownership in the Danubian area. On the basis of the local Greek cities structures a massive penetration of the Roman culture as well as of new social and cultural relations occured.

In the I[st] c. A. D. the Greek North-Western Pontic cities began to be rebuild after their collapse caused by the Getic invasion. Some epigraphical documents show a massive reconstruction of some public sacred buildings as well as new fortifications of the cities. Archaeological evidence give some additional information on the buildings. A great number of architectural remains made from local limestones and imported marbles have been also uncovered. In my opinion only these details offer some conclusions about the development of the styles in the North-Pontic region in the first c. A. D.

It is worth noting that the separate questions of the development of the monumental architecture in Olbia, Tyras, Chersonesus Tauricus and some other cities were examined by the scholars[1], but the main attention was paid to the influence of the Roman traditions on the classical architecture of the whole region. That is why the aim of my paper is to observe some questions of the evolution of the architectural styles as a part of the 1[st] - 3[nd] c. Roman provincial architecture.

The evolution of the architectural styles of this time can be devided into two periods: 1) 1[st] c. A. D.; 2) 2[nd] c. to the middle or to the third quarter of the 3[rd] c. A. D. The main direction of the first period followed the local Hellenistic traditions in order building . It concerns mainly the Doric style. It is possible to retrace the late Hellenistic forms in all the Doric capitals until the I[st] c. A. D. These details are well-known in the Pontic zone: to the North - Panticapaion, Chersonesus, Olbia, and very likely Tyras[2]; the Southern area comprised Roman provinces Bithynia, Pontus[3]: to the West - Lower Moesia and Thracia[4]. Some of these Doric buildings are known from inscriptions in Panticapaion, a Doric building (temple ? portico ?) dedicated to Aspurgos[5] in Olbia, a Doric portico excavated in the south-western part of the Roman citadel[6]. The authors of the investigations connect this building with the portico dedicated to Augustus and Tiberius known from an Olbian inscription[7]. Dio Chrysostomus relates that in Olbia there was a Zeus temple and a temple of Achilleus till the end of the I[st] c. A. D.[8]

As to the details of Ionic and Corynthian styles none of them can be dated nowa-days by the I[st] c. A. D. That is why it is possible to draw some conclusions about the existence of common stylistic traditions in order building of Pontic cities in the I[st] c. A. D. connected mainly with the Doric order.

The second period was connected with the great Roman political activity in all the Northern Pontic regions by the end of the I[st] c. A. D. The permanent Roman military troops were distributed in the main cities of the region where the new defensive systems (citadels) were built - in Tyras, Olbia, Chersonesus and Bosporus cities. The result of this new political situation was the continuous progress in the new civic and cultual buildings and those connected with the Roman military administration. The periods of Trajan's and Hadrian's reign were well known as the time of the wide scope of building activity over the whole Empire, including the far-distant frontier. Each provincial city had a list of public and civic buildings connected with Roman military administration and the city municipality. The official architecture made the single demands to all the provincial administrative buildings. That is why their decorative system supposed the existence of the definitive collection of the architectural details for façades and interiors. As a rule, the building terms were so rapid that the import of fine marble details was much more advantageous than their local production.

THRACO-DACICA, tomul XIX, nr. 1-2, București, 1998, p. 171-189

It is well known that the reign of the first Antonini was the time of flourishing of the architecture in Asia Minor when the local Hellenistic building traditions were further developed. The most famous is Pergamian and Aphrodisian schools whose workshops supplied with numerous marble architectural details the provincial cities of all the Pontic region[9]. Their production can be really called "art-industry" (in accordance with M. Fischer)[10]. On the basis of the existence of the numerous quantity of marble decorative types it is very difficult (almost impossible) to find the similar ones. With the help of the marble pieces of decoration from Olbia, Tyras, Chersonesus. It is possible also that the whole Northern Pontic region was included into the Roman marble trade system[11]. The long chain of marble details trade was closed in the Northern Pontus.

The largest collection of Asia Minor details comes from Tyras and Chersonesus. It includes the details of Ionic style bases, capitals of various forms and decorations and separate pieces of entablature (fig. 1-3). Only some of capitals were made from local limestone by architects who had come, to my mind, from Asia Minor (fig. 1-5, 9; 2-4, 6). The great number of details belongs also to Corinthian style. The collection consists from column and pilaster capitals (fig. 4-6; 9), cornices and pilaster fragments with flutes (fig. 11-15). The bases are very similar to Ionic ones, that is why there is a problem in their definition. Some large capitals from Chersonesus belonging to big monumental buildings (fig. 7; 8) are unique but the exact analogies are unknown. Palm-capital with Corythian decoration comes from Chersonesus (fig. 10). It seems to be an imitation of Pergamon style, from local limestone. The same forms of capitals are known in the Trajaneum Pergamon[12].

Besides the role of Asia Minor in the spreading of architectural details (the south direction) there was another one connected with the influence coming from Lower Moesia as an western direction. A great number of these details made from local limestone and polychromic (mainly red) marble were found in Tyras and Olbia (fig. 16).

Statistics show that in the western region - Tyras and Olbia - only 50% of the whole quantity of the details belong to the production of Asia Minor white in Chersonesus there are more than 75%. This situation to my mind really reflects the main trade directions in 2 - 3 c. A. D. to the Northern Pontic cities.

Unfortunately it is impossible now to connect any details with the building remains excavated in situ. Only with the help of inscriptions the scholars know about the existence of the following temples and civic buildings in the cities of the region. In Tyras, for example, a big building with Ionic or Corynthian portico (temple?) was dedicated to Trajan or Hadrian[13]. In Olbia there was the temple of Apollo Prostates[14], situated in the centre of the Roman citadel a well-known place where the inscriptions to that God were concentrated. Epigraphic documents show that the temples and special buildings dedicated to different Gods and Roman Emperors in Ionic style were build: to Serapis and Isis, Asclepios and Hygeia and Poseidon - in Olbia[15], to Aphrodite - in Chersonesus[16]. Temples dedicated to Aphrodite, Poseidon, Zeus were built in some Bosporus cities[17]. It is also known that in Olbia thermae were built by an architect from Nicomedia who came to Olbia from Tomis[18]. So it is possible to consider the existence of an usual practice to invite architects from Asia Minor for work in Pontic cities. This practice is well-known from Plinius the Young's letters to Trajan[19].

Collection of the order details from the Northern Pontic cities offer the opportunity to draw some conclusions about the main directions of styles development in I-III c. A. D. The main one was connected with the famous architectural schools of Asia Minor while the second was bound to the local building tradition coming from the Danubian direction.

NOTES

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2. I. R. Pichikyan, *Malaya Aziya...,* p. 223; A.V. Bujskikch, *Korinfskij order v antychnij architekturi Pivnichnogo Prichernomor'ja,* in Architekturnaja spadschyna Ukrainy, N 2, Kiev, 1995, 12-18.

3. A. Peschlow - Bindocat, I. Peschlow, *Die Sammlung Turan Beler in Kumbaba bei Şile,* IstMitt, Bd. 27/28, Tl. 1, 1977/1978, 324; R. M. Harrison, *Amorium 1988. The First Preliminary Excavation,* AnatSt, Vol. XXXIX ,1989, 173, fig. 5.

4. V. N. Baumann, *La villa rustica de Niculiţel (dép. de Tulcea),* Dacia, NS, XXIII, 1979, 114, I; S. Petrova, *Tipologiya i osobenosti na rimsko - dorijskya kapitel v Miziya i v Trakiya,* in Archeologia, Sofija, Kn. 3, 1990, 9, obr. 1.

5. V. D. Blavatskij, *Stroitel'noje delo Pantikapeya po dannym raskopok 1945-1949 i 1952-1953,* MIA, N 56, 1957, 68-81, fig. 26 a.

6. V. V. Krapivina, A. V. Bujskikch, *Predvaritel'nyje itogi issledovanyja jugo-vostochnoj chasti Verchnego goroda Olvii 1982-1996,* in Nikonij i antichnyj mir Severnogo Prichernomor'ja, Odessa, 1997, 122-127.

7. IOSPE, I², 181.

8. Dio Chrys., Or., XXXVI.

9. E. Weigand, *Baalbek und Rom, die römische Reichkunst in ihrer Entwickelung und Differenzierung,* JdAI, Bd. XXIX ,1914; M. Fischer, *Das korintische Kapitell im alten Israel in der hellenistischen und römischen Periode,* Mainz-am-Rhein, 1990.

10. M. Fischer, *Figured Capitals in Roman Palestine: Marble Imports and Local Stones: Some Aspects of "Imperial" and "Provincial" Art,* AA, Heft 1, 1991, 142.

11. Idem, *Marble, Urbanism and Ideology in Roman Palestine: the Caesarea Example,* in Caesarea Maritima, Leiden, New York, Köln, 1986, 251-252.

12. W. Radt, *Pergamon. Geschichte und Bauten, Funde und Erforschungen einer antiken Metropole,* Köln, 1988, Taf. 16.

13. P. O. Karyshkovskij, *Novyje tirasskije nadpisi,* in Antychnaya Tira i srednevekovyj Belgorod, Kiev,1979, 76-79.

14. B.V. Pharmakovskij, *Raskopki v Olvii,* OAK za 1906, 1909, 11,12.

15. IOSPE, I², 184.

16. IOSPE, I², 440, 441, 442, 443, 446; I. R. Pichikyan, *Malaya Azya...,* 249-251, fig. 95.

17. KBN, 942, 1045, 1115, 1134.

18. IOSPE, I², 174.

19. Plin., *Ep.* X, 18-99.

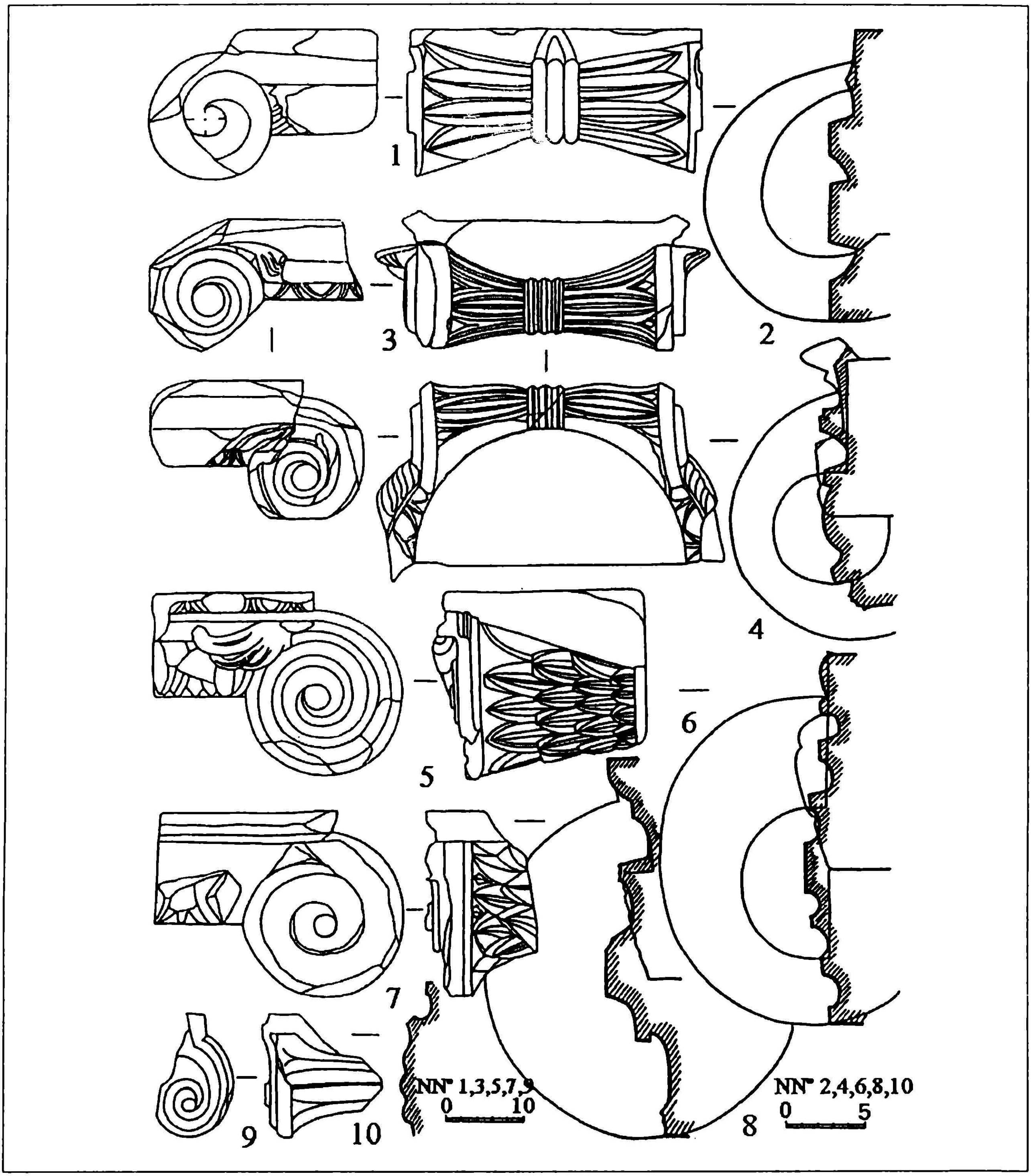


Fig. 1 Ionic capitals. Chersonesus : 1, 3, 7 - marble; 5, 9 - limestone.

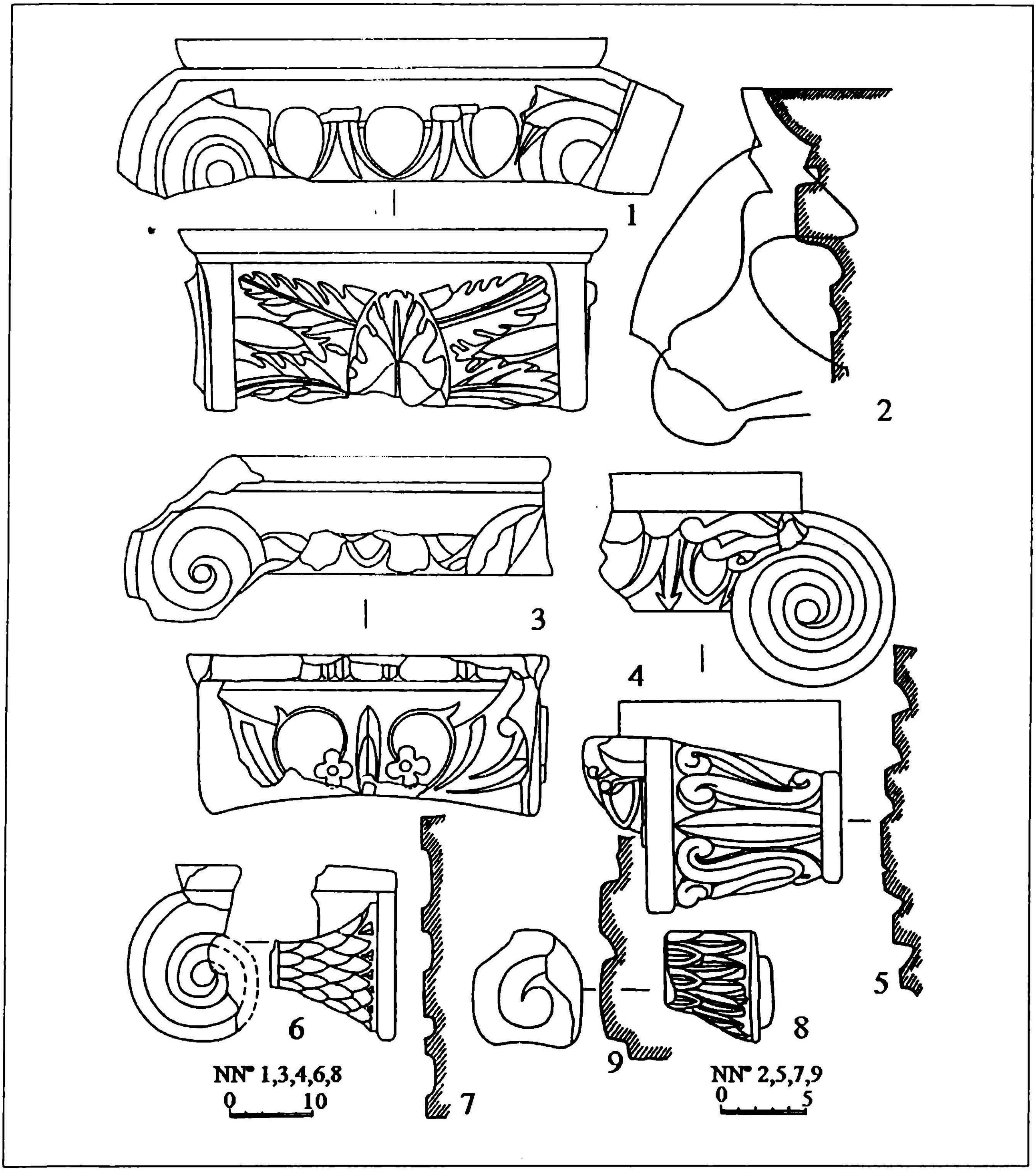


Fig. 2 Ionic capitals. Chersonesus : 1, 3, 8 - marble; 4, 6 - limestone.

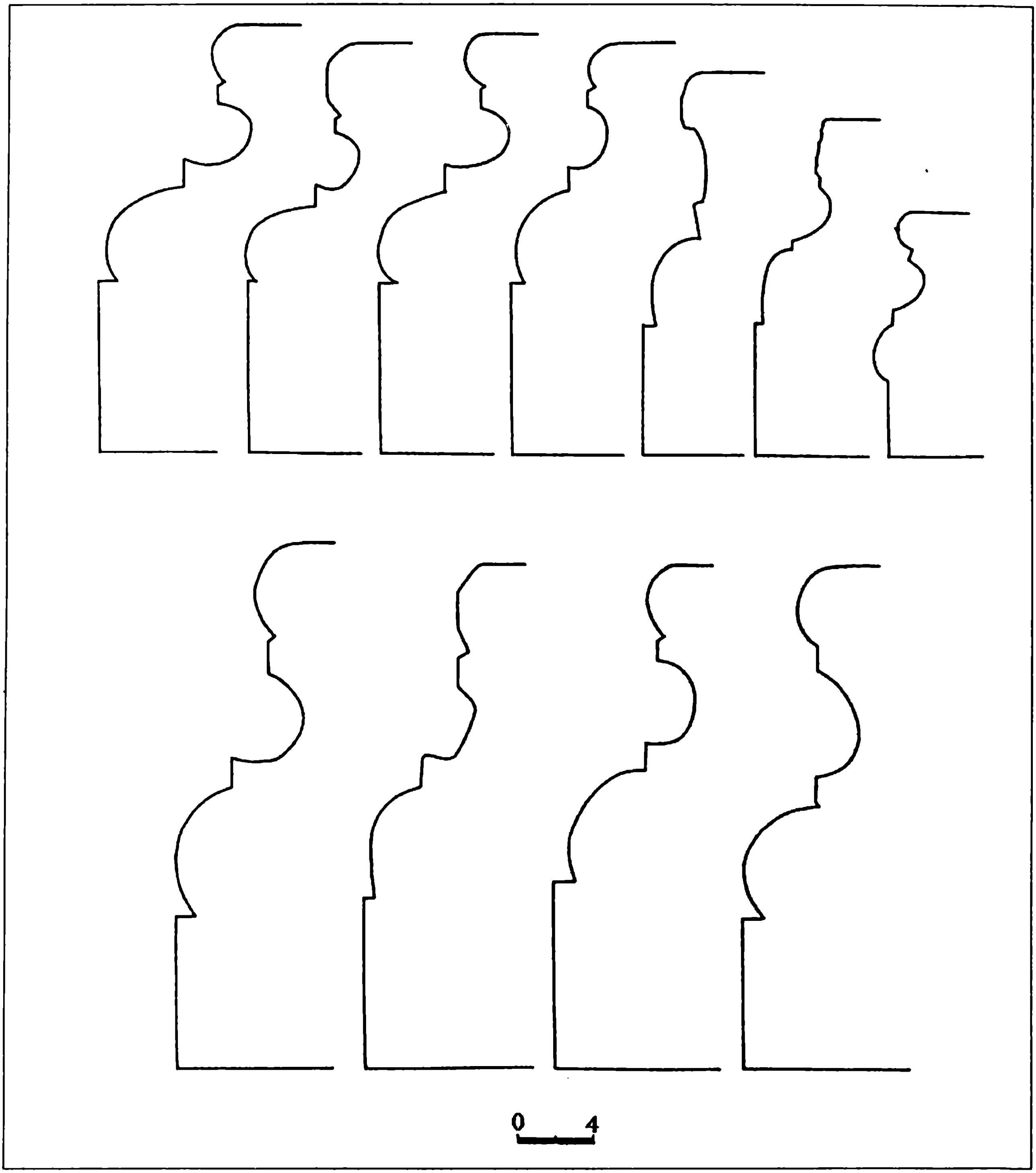


Fig. 3 Ionic (Corynthian ?) bases. Chersonesus. Marble.

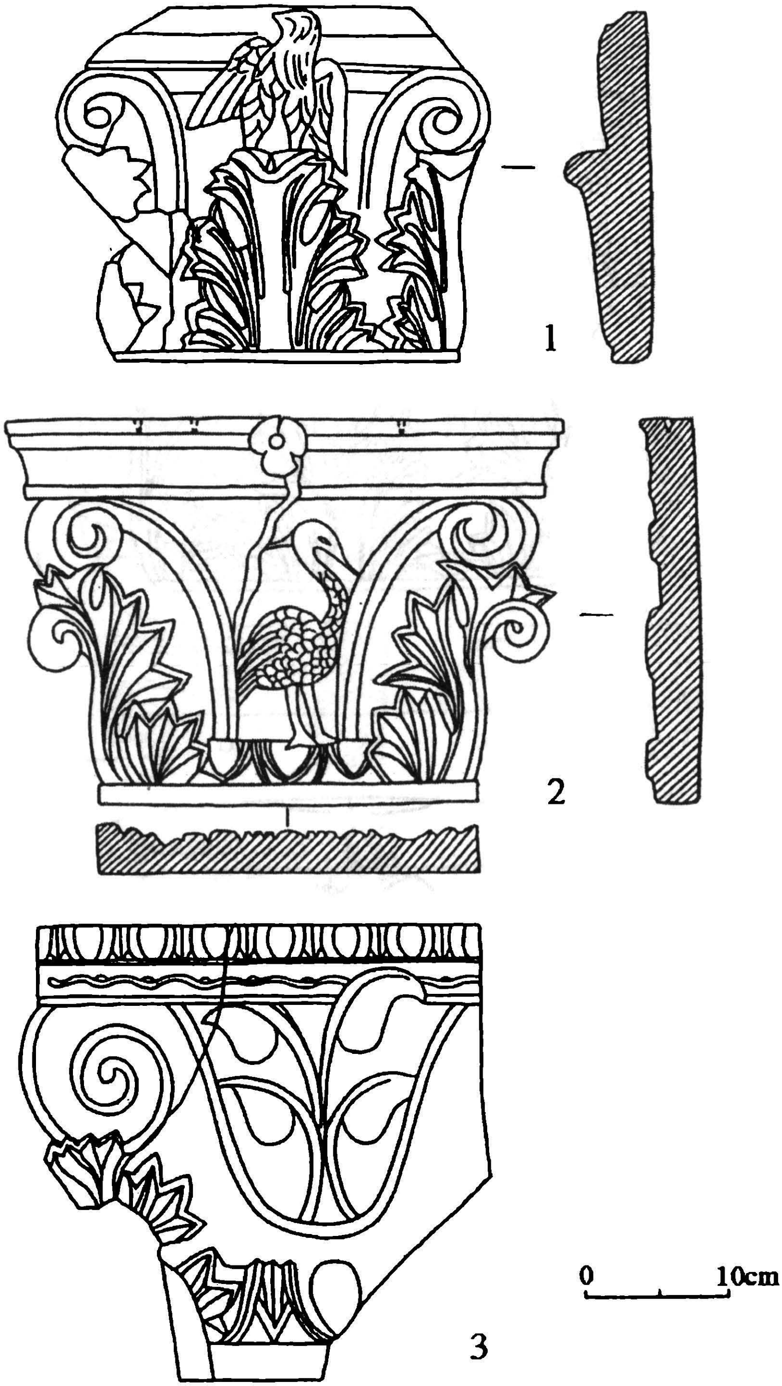


Fig. 4 Pilaster capitals. Corynthian style. Chersonesus. Marble.

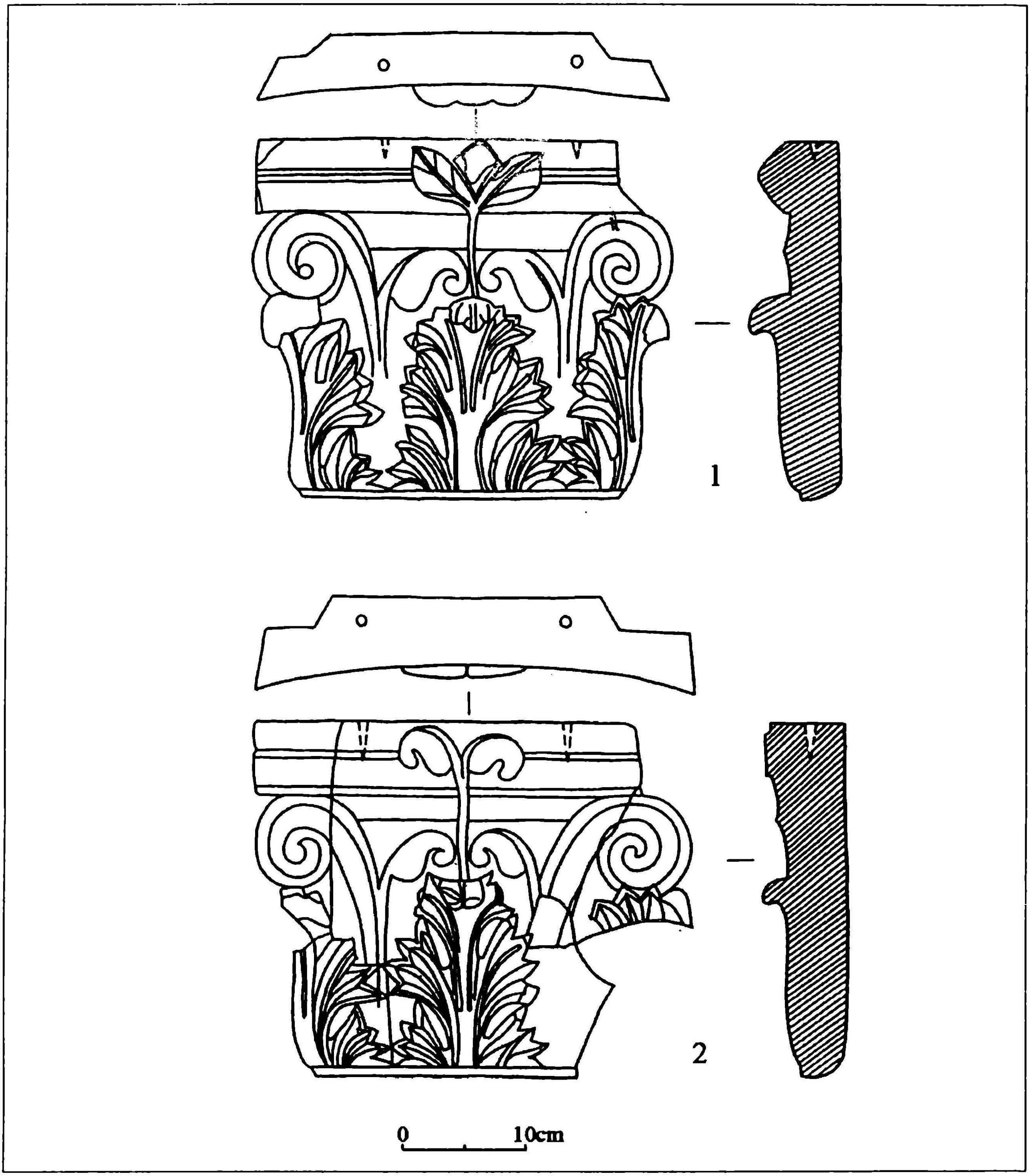


Fig. 5 Pilaster capitals. Corynthian style. Chersonesus. Marble.

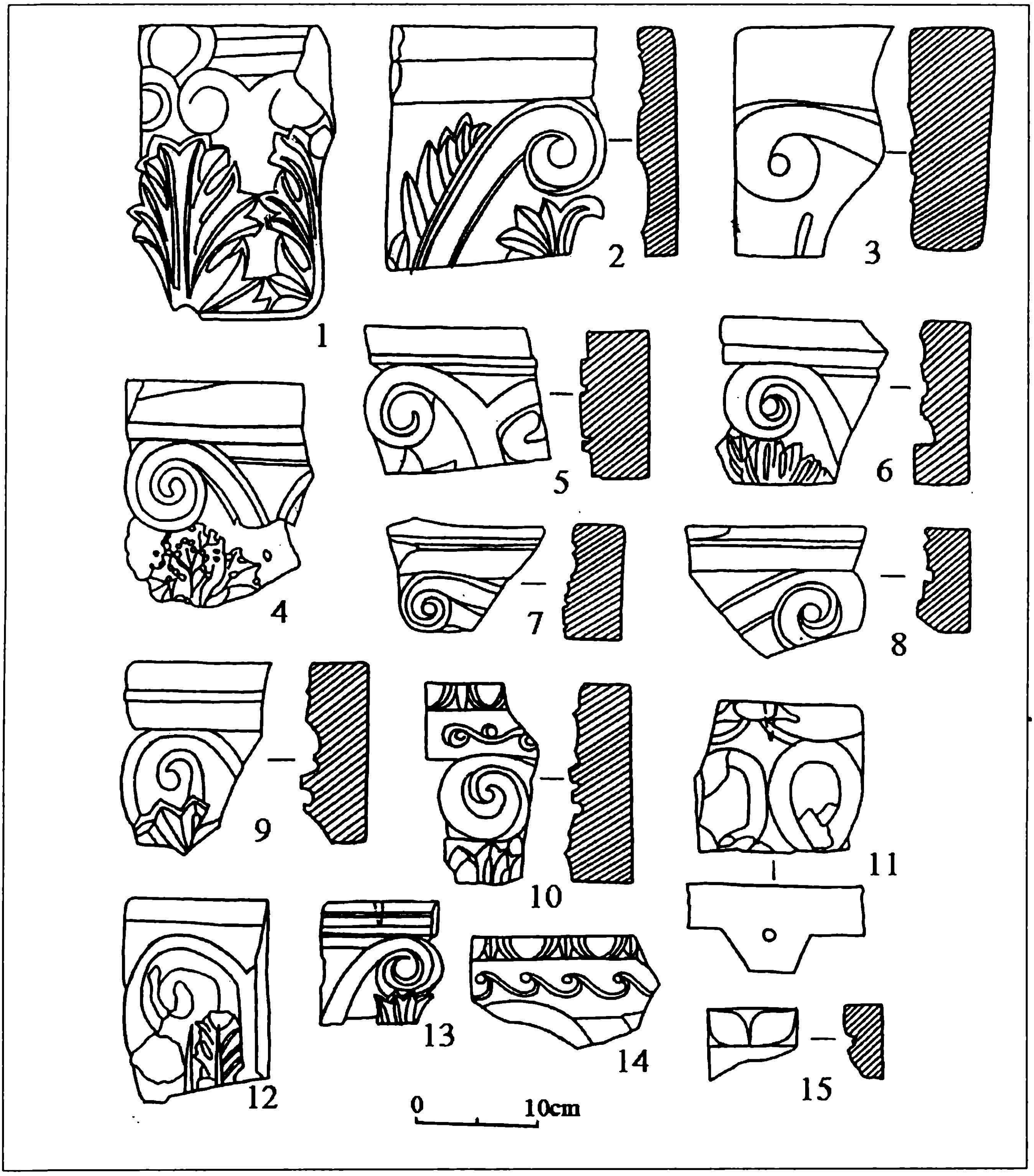


Fig. 6 Fragments of Corynthian pilaster capitals. Chersonesus. Marble.

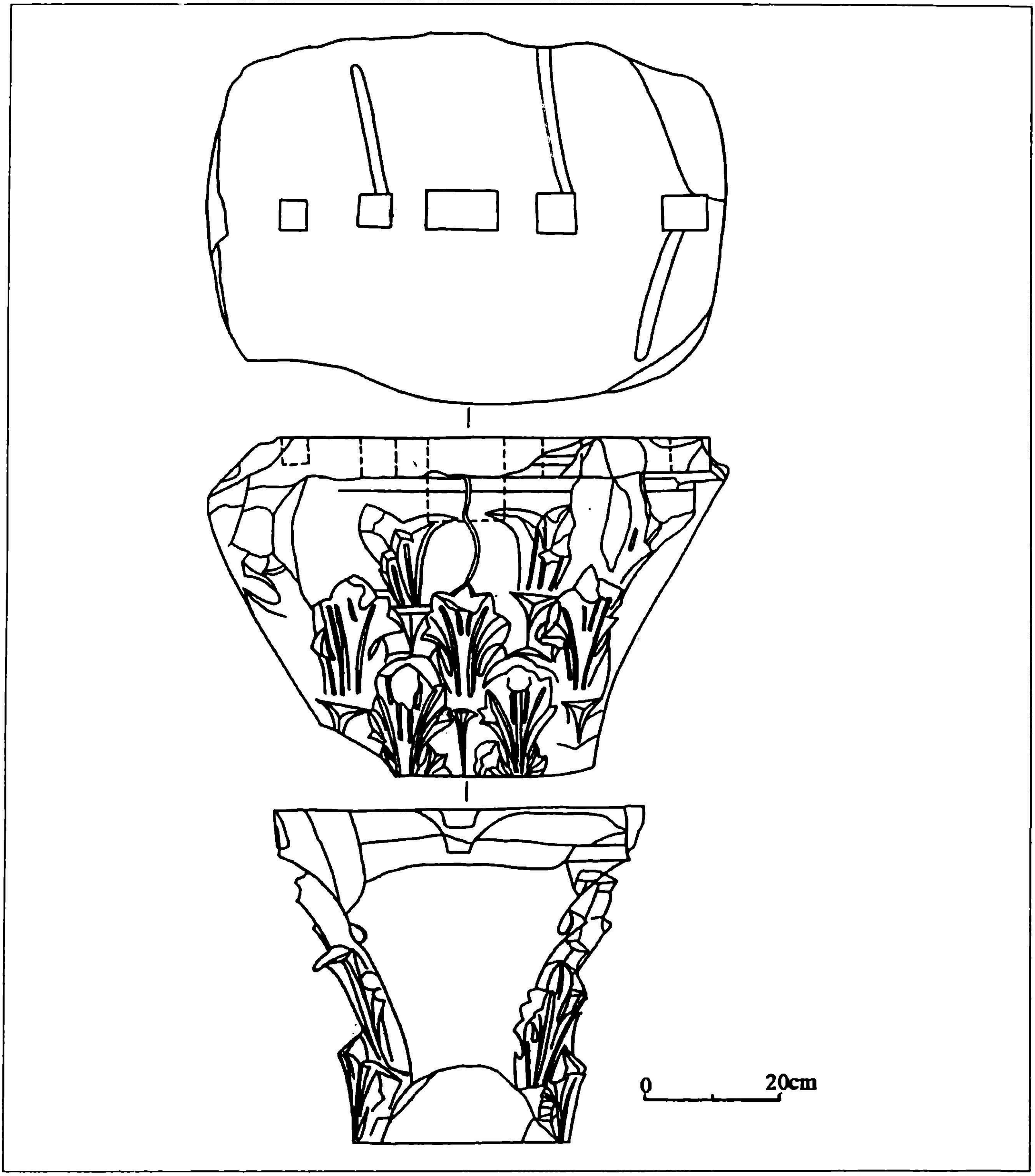


Fig. 7 Capital of Corynthian style. Bahchisaraj (from Chersonesus ?). Marble.

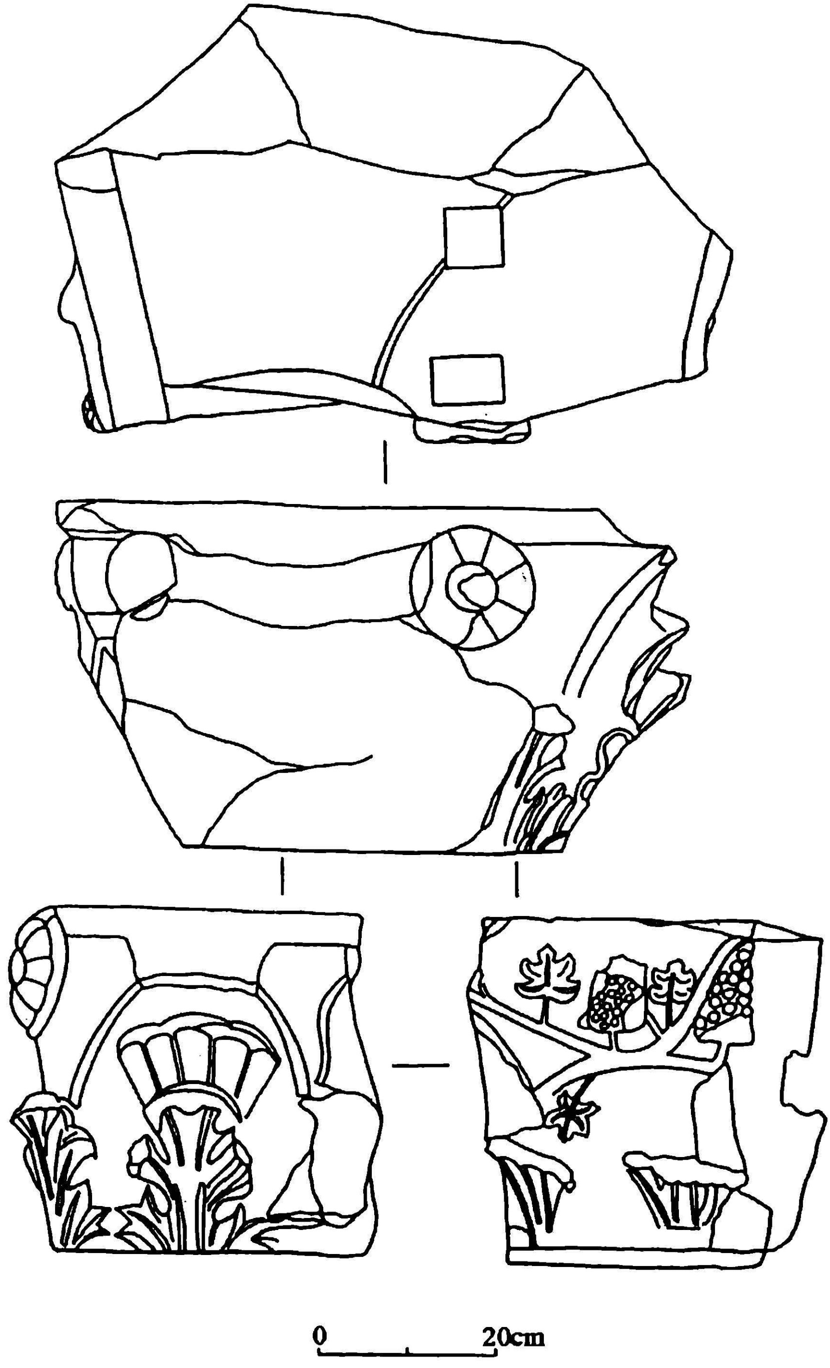


Fig. 8 Capital of Corynthian style. Chersonesus. Marble.

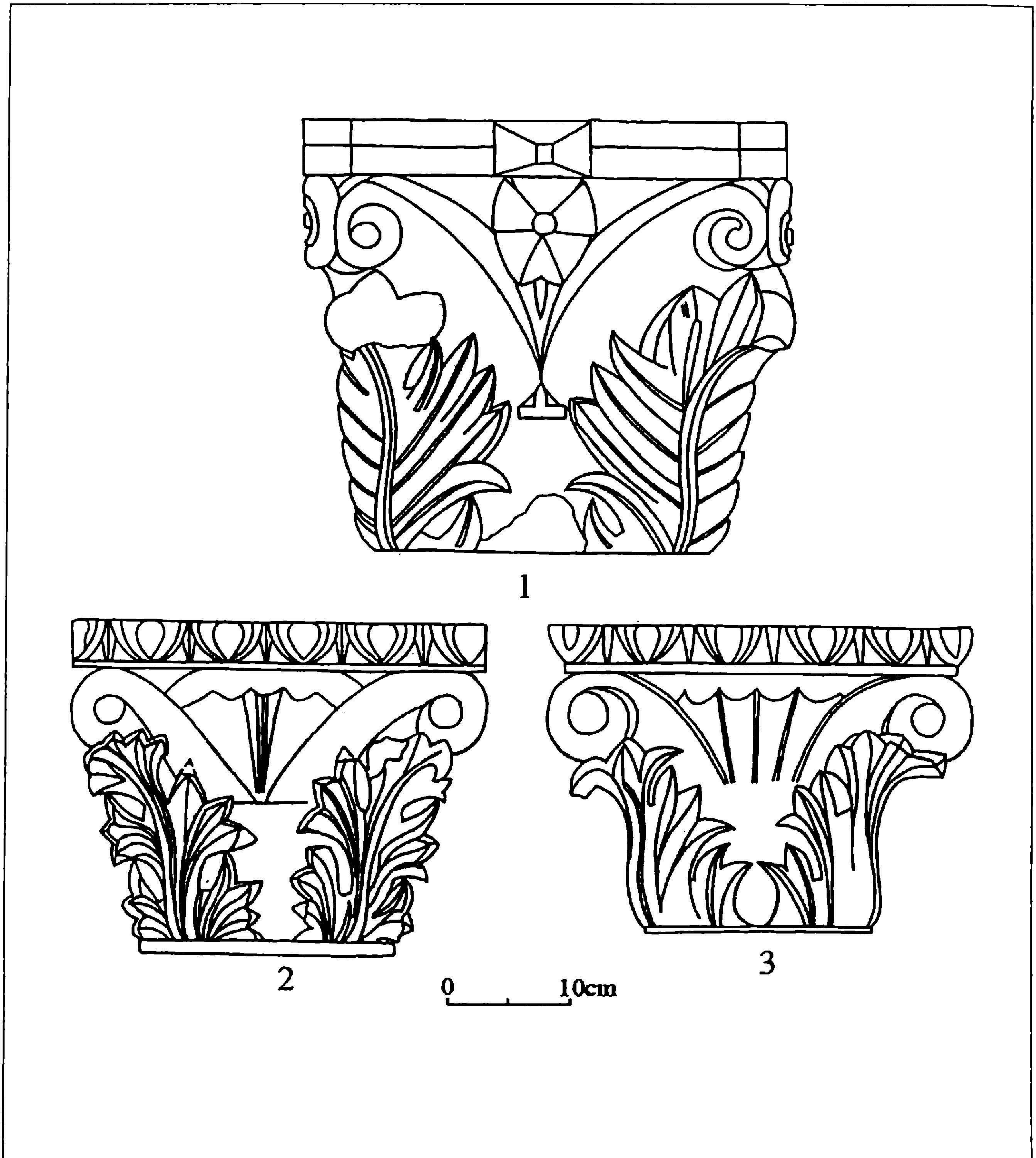


Fig. 9 Corynthian capitals. Chersonesus. Limestone.

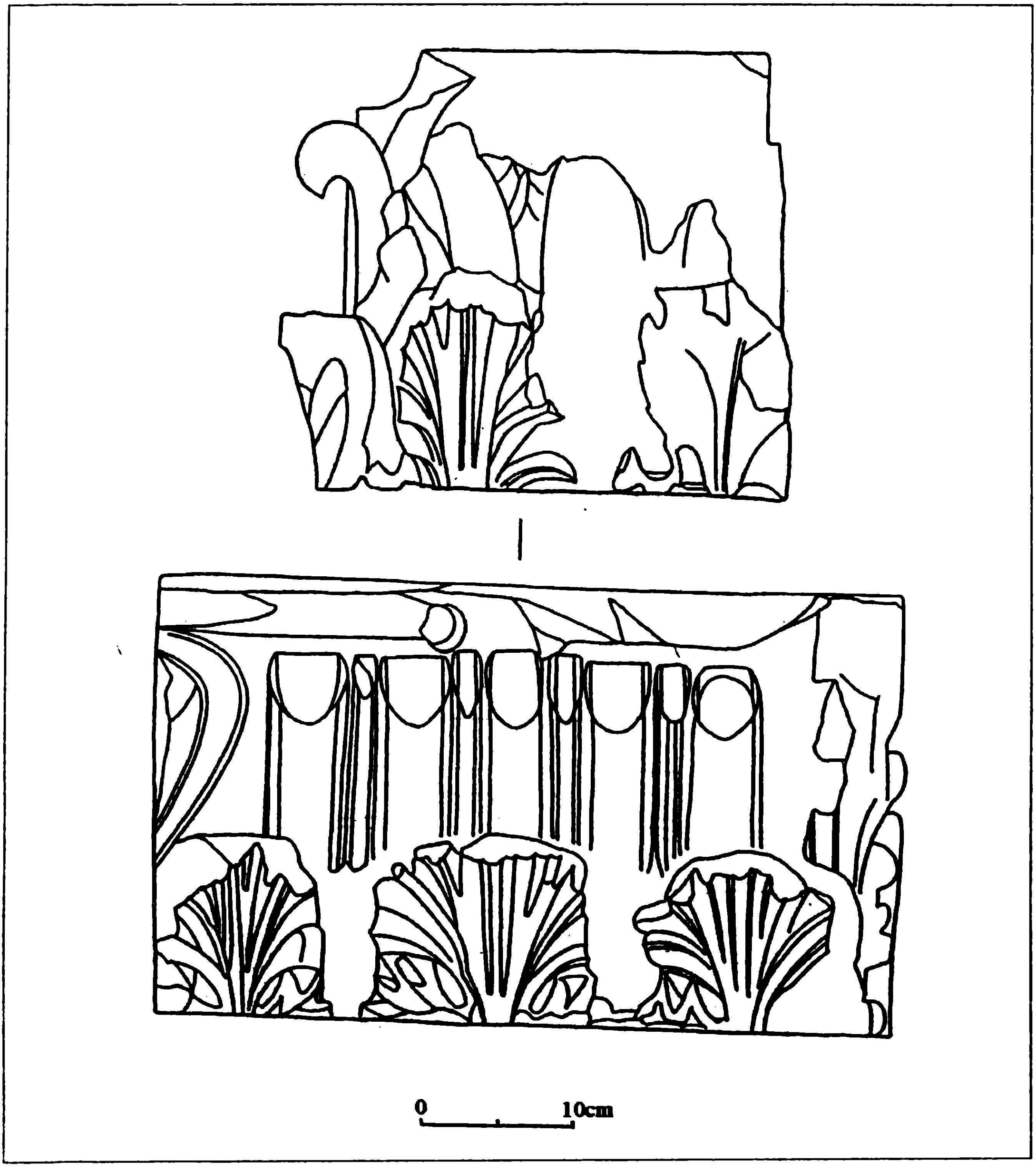


Fig. 10 Palm-capital. Chersonesus. Limestone.

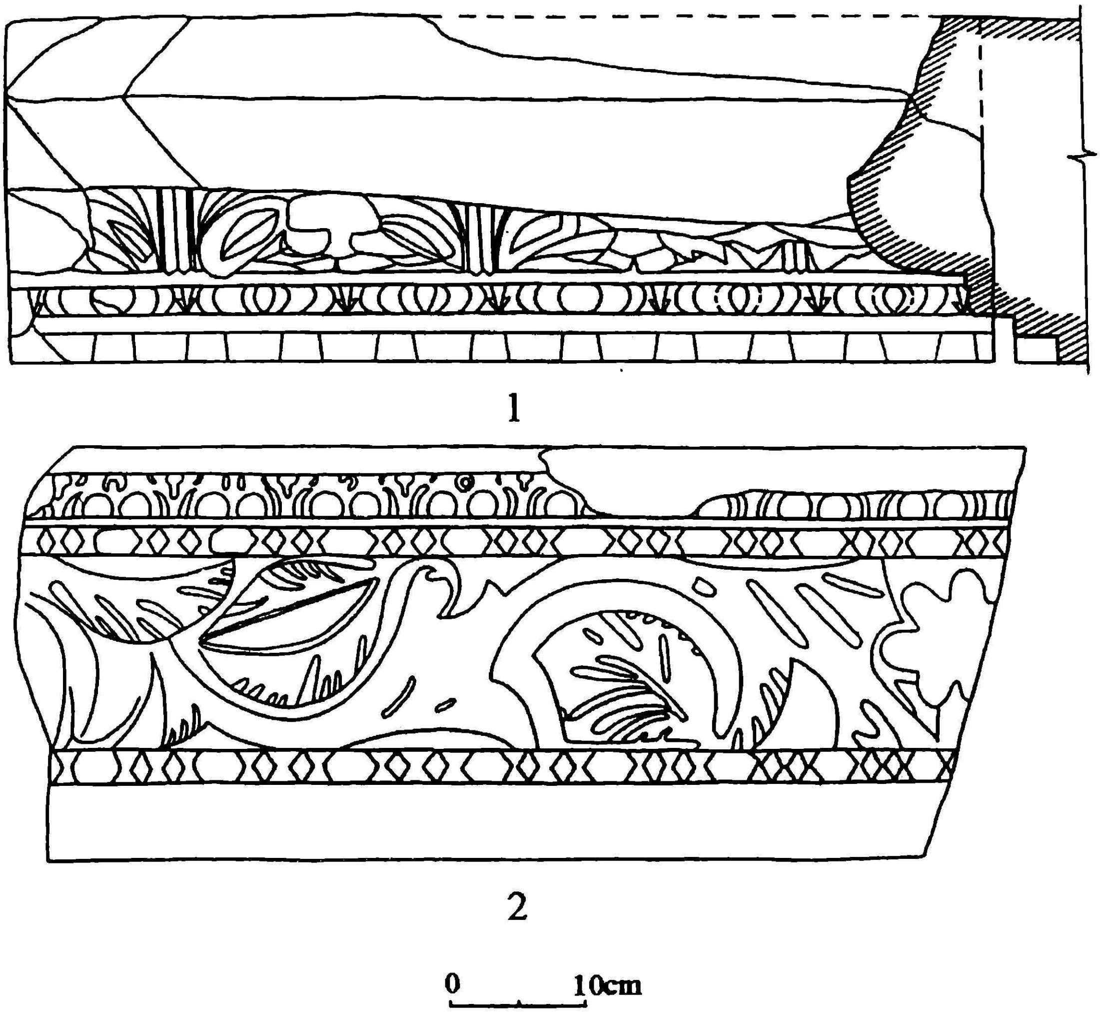


Fig. 11 Cornice (1) and frieze (2) of Corynthian style. Chersonesus. Marble.

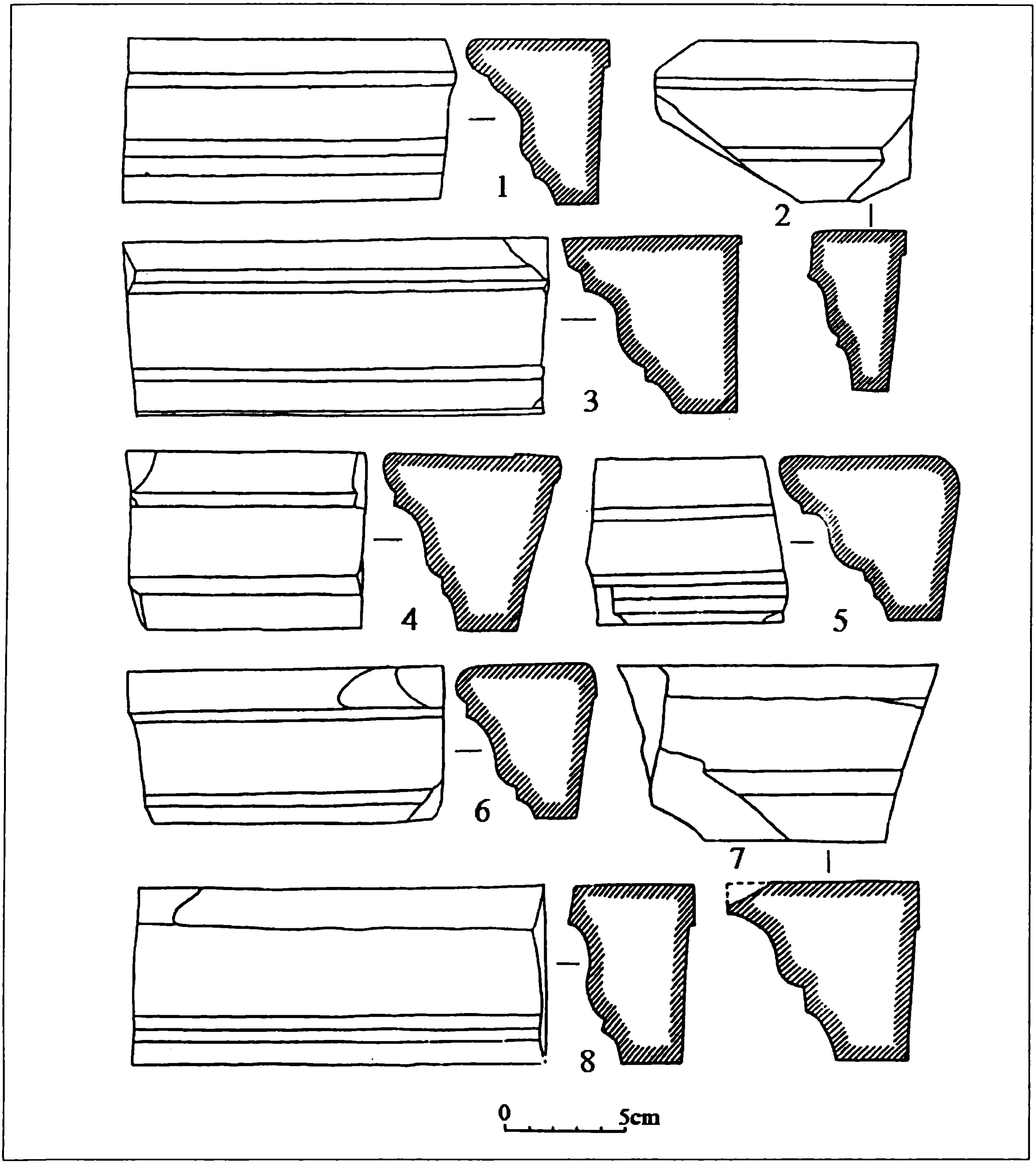


Fig. 12 Cornices. Chersonesus. Marble.

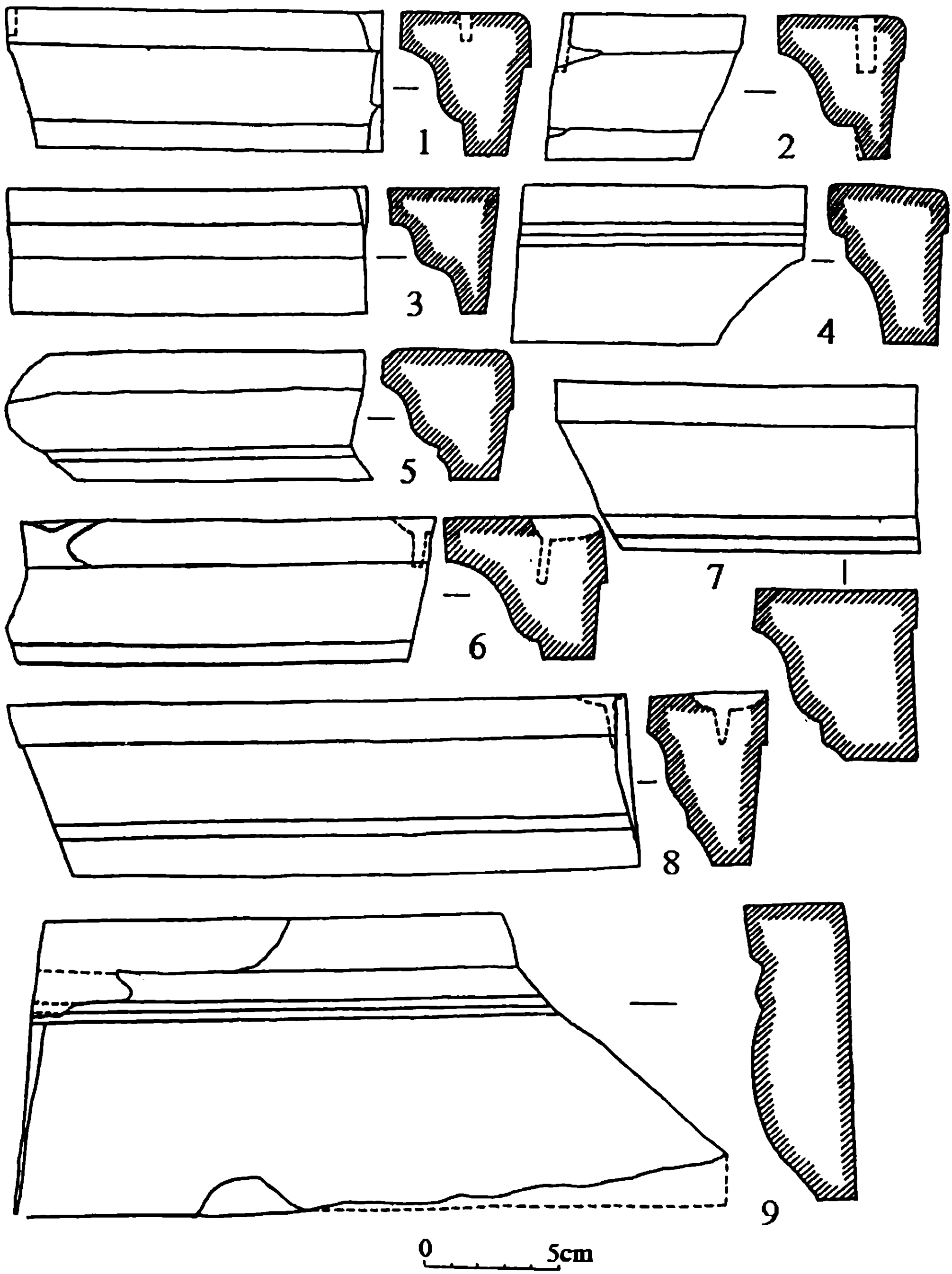


Fig. 13 Cornices (1-8) and base (9). Chersonesus. Marble.

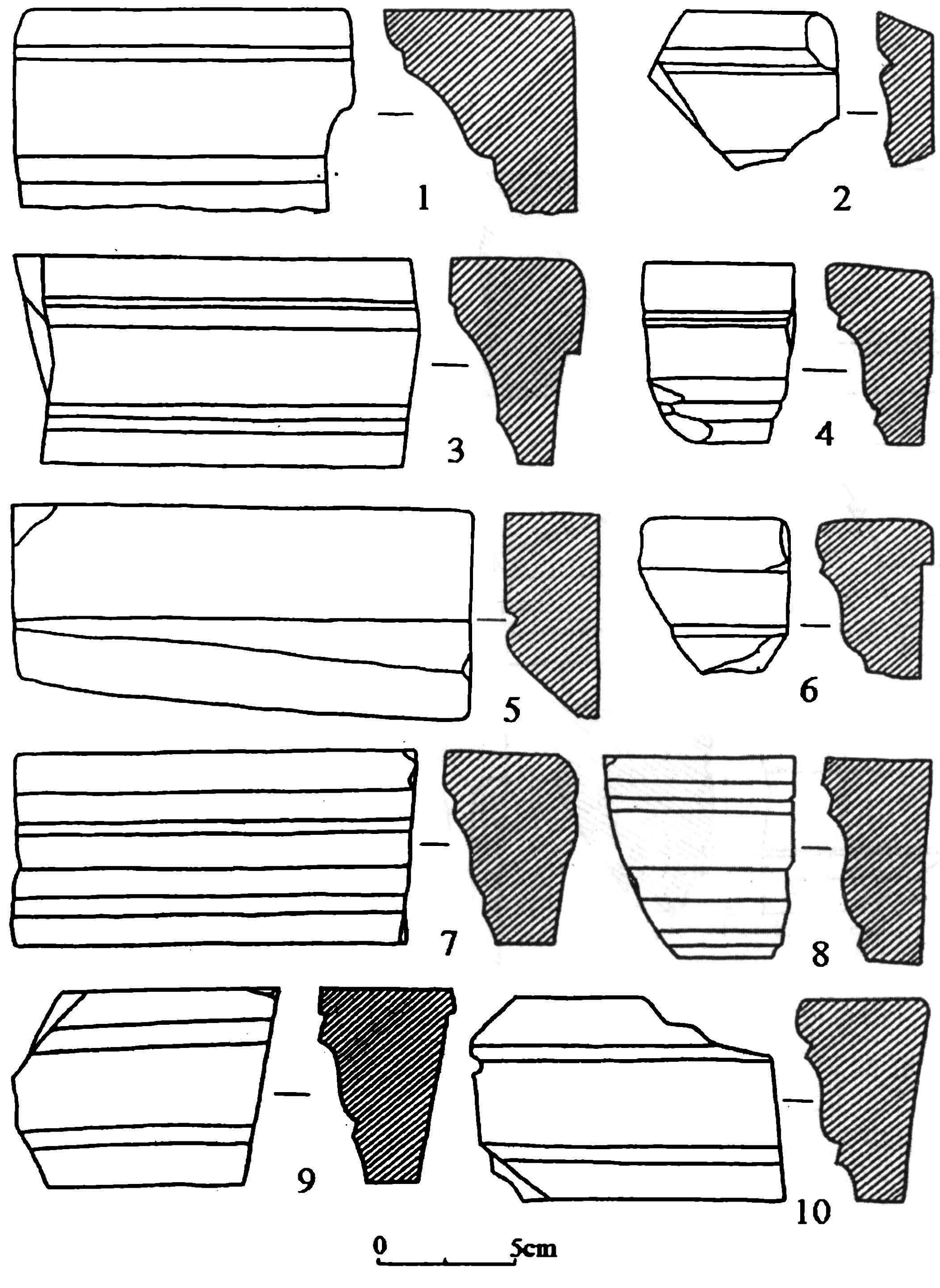


Fig. 14 Cornices. Olbia (1-3), Tyras (4-10). Marble.

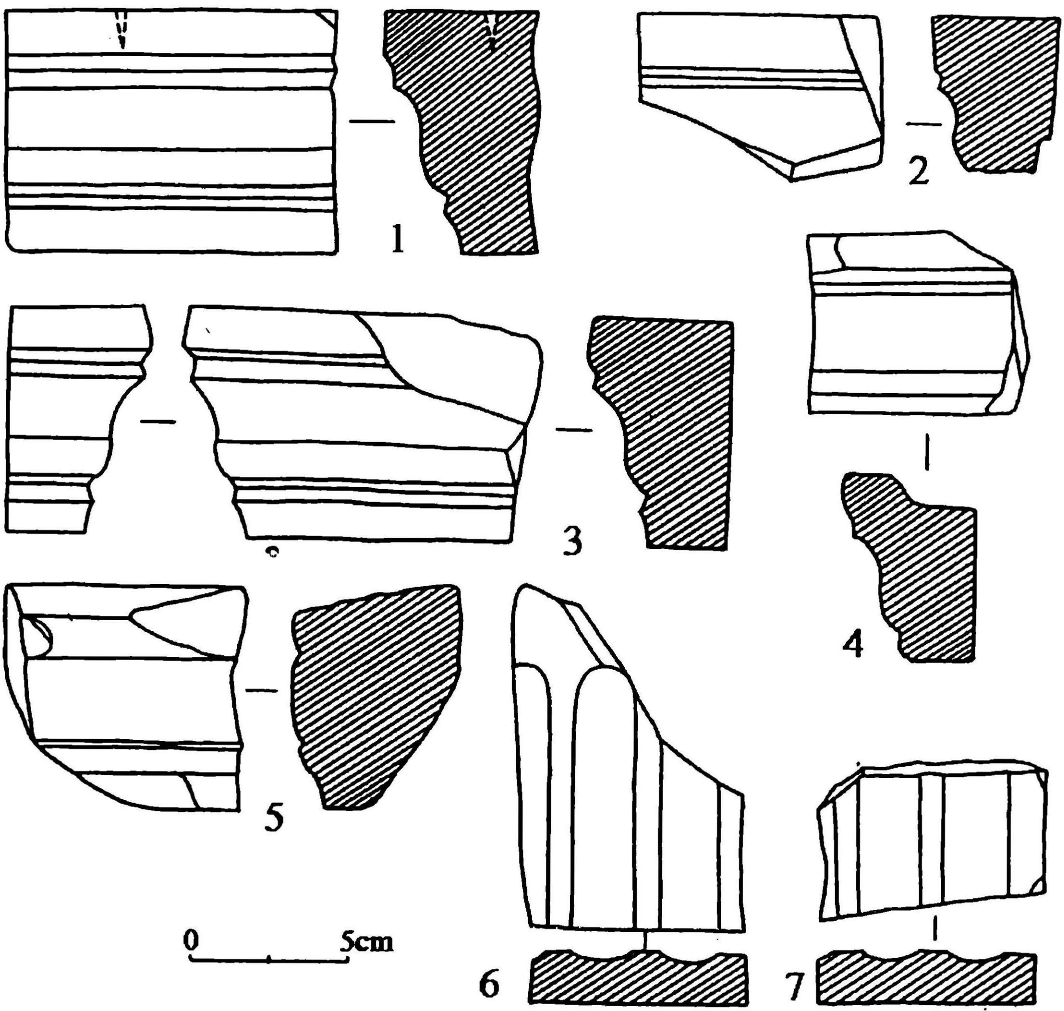


Fig. 15 Cornices (1-5), pilaster fragments (6-7). Tyras. Marble.

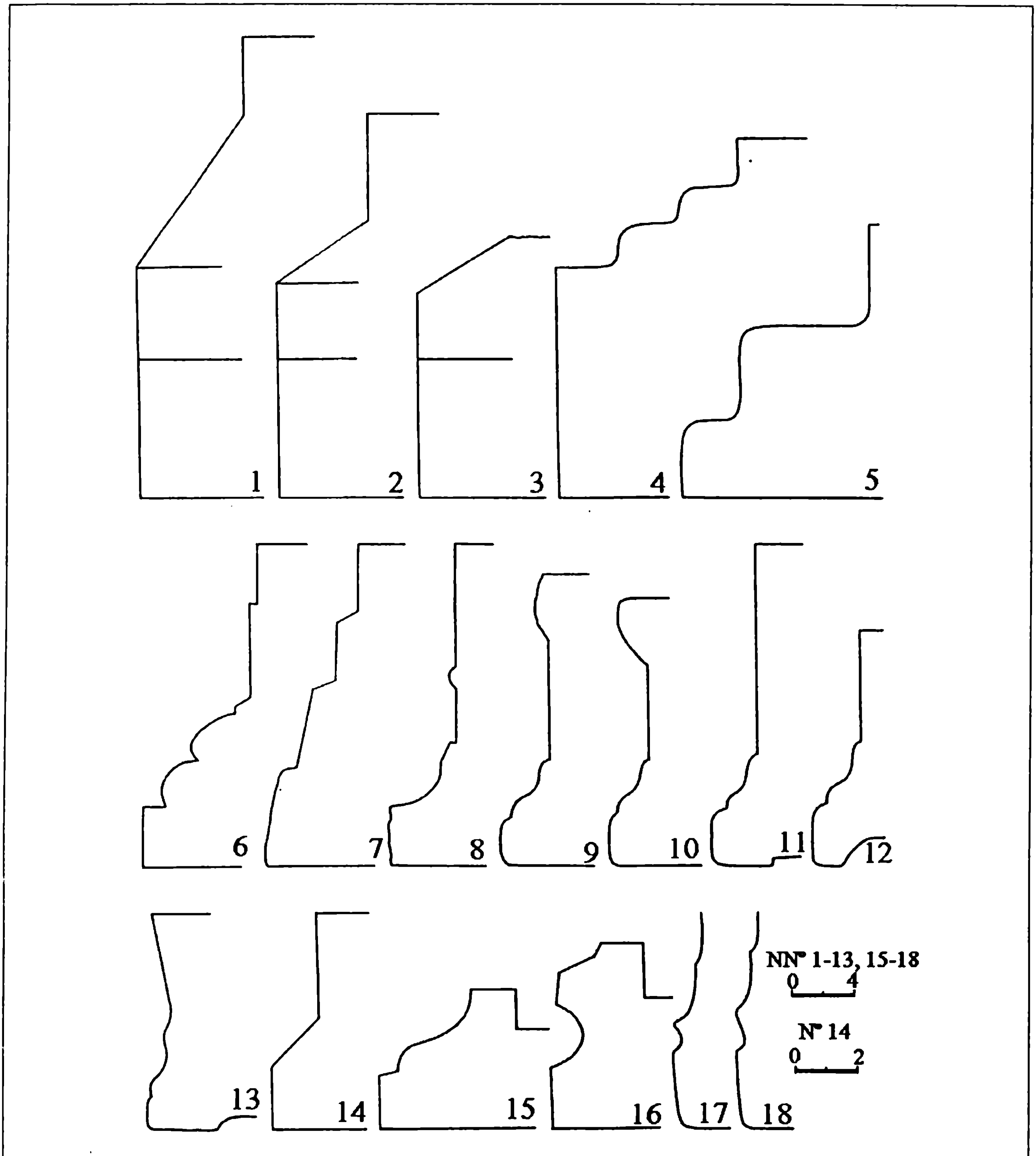


Fig. 16 Bases. Tyras (1-5), Olbia (6-16), Chersonesus (17-18). Limestone (1-8), marble (9-18).